

Message Text

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11
ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 OMB-01 /078 W
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R 221511Z NOV 74
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 981
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN

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CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, RH, ZA
SUBJECT: NEW SHOOTING INCIDENT AT KAZUNGULA FERRY

REF: LUSAKA 2095, 1995

1. TIMES OF ZAMBIA REPORTED ON NOV 21 SHOOTING INCIDENT
PREVIOUS DAY BETWEEN ZAMBIAN AND RHODEISAN SECURITY
FORCES AT KAZUNGULA. ACCORDING TO TIMES EYE-WITNESS
CORRESPONDENT, FIRING COMMENCED IN EARLY AFTERNOON
AND CONTINUED FOR SIX HOURS. RIFLE, AUTOMATIC
WEAPONS, AND EVEN MORTAR FIRE REPORTEDLY USED BY
BOTH SIDES. NO CASUALTIES WERE REPORTED BUT FERRY
TRAFFIC WAS HALTED WHEN GUNFIRE SNAPPED ONE OF THE
PONTOON CONTROL CABLES WHILE FERRY WAS IN MID-STREAM.

2. TODAY'S TIMES REPORTS THAT RHODESIANS INITIATED
THE FIRING BUT IT ALSO CARRIES REPORT OF RHODESIAN
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GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ALLEGING IT WAS ZAMBIANS WHO
HAD FIRED FIRST AND RHODESIANS HAD RESPONDED ONLY

WHEN ZAMBIA'S HAD FIRED MORTAR SHELL ACROSS ZAMBEZI.
SENIOR ZAMBIA'S POLICE, CUSTOMS, AND IMMIGRATION
OFFICIALS ARE REPORTEDLY ON SCENE TO INVESTIGATE.

3. MEANWHILE, KAZUNGULA FERRY SAID TO BE IDLE AS CREW MEMBERS HAVE DISPERSED TO THEIR VILLAGES AND ARE REFUSING TO RETURN TO WORK UNTIL THEY CAN BE ASSURED THEIR LIVES NOT ENDANGERED. INCIDENT HAS INTERRUPTED ROAD TRAFFIC BETWEEN ZAMBIA AND BOTSWANA. AMONG THOSE CAUGHT ON BOTSWANA SIDE ARE 19 TOURISTS AND THREE BUSES BELONGING ZAMBIA'S NATIONAL TOURIST BUREAU WHICH, APPARENTLY LULLED BY RECENT ABSENCE OF INCIDENTS AT KAZUNGULA, HAS BEEN RUNNING BUS TOURS ACROSS ZAMBEZI TO BOTSWANA'S CHOBÉ GAME PRESERVE. TOURISTS WILL NOW PRESUMABLY BE FLOWN BACK TO ZAMBIA.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST REPORTED INCIDENT OF VIOLENCE AT KAZUNGULA QUADRIPOINT IN SIX WEEKS. NEVERTHELESS, IT UNDERLINES CONTINUED VOLATILITY OF SITUATION IN THIS SENSITIVE AREA. WHILE TIMES QUOTES ONE UNNAMED ZAMBIA'S OFFICIAL AS EXPRESSING WISH BORDER THERE COULD BE CLOSED UNTIL RHODESIAN SITUATION SETTLED, WE DOUBT THAT EITHER GRZ OR BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT PREPARED TAKE SUCH STEP. THIS ALSO THE VIEW OF BOTSWANA'S HIGH COMMISSION HERE. HOWEVER, SHOOTING INCIDENTS HAVE APPARENTLY HAD EFFECT OF INTIMIDATING FOR PRESENT FERRY CREWMEN AND OTHERS LIVING IN KAZUNGULA AREA. FURTHER INCIDENTS, ESPECIALLY IF CASUALTIES WERE TO RESULT, COULD SEE FERRY CLOSED DOWN FOR PROLONGED PERIOD.

5. FOR GABORONE: BOTSWANA'S HICOM OFFICER HERE THOUGHT THAT REPORT ON THIS INCIDENT MAY HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED GOB BY DISTRICT OFFICER IN KASANE. IF SO, IT MAY PROVIDE USEFUL ADDITIONAL INFO BOTH ON ORIGIN OF LATEST KAZUNGULA INCIDENT AND ON IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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THE FERRY.
WILKOWSKI

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, BORDER INCIDENTS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LUSAKA02432
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740340-0302
From: LUSAKA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741121/aaaaaqyd.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LUSAKA 2095, 1995
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <24 MAR 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW SHOOTING INCIDENT AT KAZUNGULA FERRY
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, RH, ZA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005